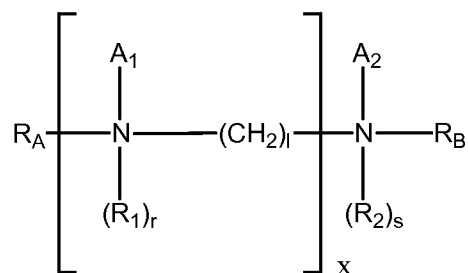


Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

Listing of the Claims

Claim 1. (Currently amended) A compound or polycation having the formula:



or salt thereof where:

x is an integer ranging from 1 to about 20;

l is an integer ranging from 1 to about 6;

r and s, independently of one another, are 0 or 1, wherein when r is 1, the N bonded to R₁ and A₁ has a positive charge, and when s is 1, the N bonded to R₂ and A₂ has a positive charge;

R_A and R_B, independently of one another, are selected from the group consisting of H, or an alkyl, hydroalkyl or thiol-substituted alkyl group having from 1 to 6 carbon atoms;

R₁ and R₂, independently of one another, are selected from the group consisting of alkyl groups having 1 to about 6 carbon atoms; and

A₁ and A₂, independently of other A₁ and A₂ groups, are selected from the group consisting of a -CH(D-L)₂ and a -C(D-L)₃ group wherein D is selected from the group

consisting of --CO-- , $\text{--CO}_2\text{--}$, --O--C--O-- , --CO--N-- , --O--CO--N-- , --O-- , and --S-- , and L is selected from the group consisting of:

- (a) a straight chain or branched alkyl, alkenyl, or alkynyl group having from 2 to about 22 carbon atoms wherein one or more non-neighboring $\text{--CH}_2\text{--}$ groups can be replaced with an O or S atom;
- (b) a substituted straight chain or branched alkyl, alkenyl, or alkynyl group having from 2 to about 22 carbon atoms wherein the substituent is an aromatic, alicyclic heterocyclic or polycyclic ring and wherein one or more of the non-neighboring ~~neighboring~~ $\text{--CH}_2\text{--}$ groups of said alkyl, alkenyl or alkynyl group can be substituted with an O or S atom; and
- (c) an aromatic, alicyclic, heterocyclic and a polycyclic ring moiety.

Claim 2. (Previously presented) The compound or polycation of claim 1 wherein L is selected from the group consisting of a straight chain or branched alkyl, alkenyl, or alkynyl group having from 2 to about 22 carbon atoms wherein one or more non-neighboring $\text{--CH}_2\text{--}$ groups can be replaced with an O or S atom.

Claim 3. (Currently amended) The compound or polycation of claim 1 wherein L is selected from the group consisting of a substituted straight chain or branched alkyl, alkenyl, or alkynyl group having from 2 to about 22 carbon atoms wherein the substituent is an aromatic, alicyclic heterocyclic or polycyclic ring and wherein one or more of the non-neighboring ~~neighboring~~ $\text{--CH}_2\text{--}$ groups of said alkyl, alkenyl or alkynyl group can be substituted with an O or S atom.

Claim 4. (Cancelled) The compound or polycation of claim 1 wherein L is selected from the group consisting of an aromatic, alicyclic, heterocyclic and a polycyclic ring moiety.

Claim 5. (Previously presented) A lipid aggregate which comprises one or more compounds of claim 1.

Claim 6-20. (Cancelled)